

# Qian and Dui



Appropriately, the harvest time and close of our solar year can be represented by the metal element. The I Ching or the Book of Changes places great emphasis on the transitional element in all of our lives. The trigrams, Qian and Dui, Heaven and Lake, can be used to instruct us about this time of year. These trigrams also known as gua point us to new realities of rest, excitement and creativity. The trigrams, being symbols, generate countless possibilities for us to interpret and apply into our lives. They invite you into getting in touch with your own creativity and intuition.

The trigrams, Qian and Dui, are the first in the Shao Yong sequence.

Heaven Qian	Lake Dui	Fire Li	Thunder Zhen	Wind Xun	Water Kan	Mountain Gen	Earth Kun
Du + Metal Early Winter Night 1	Lu - LI - Metal Fall Evening 2	Ht - SI Fire Mid Summer Mid Day 3	Pc - SJ + Wood Spring Mid Morning 4	GB - Liv - Wood Early Summer Late Morning 5	UB - Kid Water Mid Winter Mid Night 6	St - Sp - Earth Late Winter Early Morning 7	Ren + Earth Late Summer Afternoon 8

Qian is the first in row. It is made up of 3 yang lines also called yao. It is solidly yang and yet the most ethereal, rising above. Change occurs in the next triagram, Dui. A yin broken line enters in from the top. Dui is still mostly yang but an image forms visually. The top of the triagram is concave. There is a depression that forms in the middle where water can collect and form the Lake. As with all of the other trigrams, there are pictorial clues as to the nature of each gua.

In English, Qian is translated as Heaven or Sky. It is not the heaven of monotheistic religions. It is a direction, an energy, a tendency. Qian is early winter. We can see how a tree which has grown all summer long drops its leaves and collects its sap inward. It is an image of strength and resourcefulness. Qian is the creative principle. It is father, sovereign and ruler. It is male, active and yet cold and icy. It holds the invisible seeds of growth. Great beginnings are possible. It is one and unified. It is content and bright. It can also rise in midsummer with the summer solstice and the height of activity. Qian is effortless. It is metal as in the knife edge cutting effortlessly through. It catches the eye with its brilliance like smooth jade. It happens before midnight, midwinter. It has outgrown the earth and risen above it. It along with Dui represents the lungs.

Dui which is translated as Lake is a joyful image. Here the picture is of the still waters of a lake. However, we must be wary. Under the still waters dangers may be waiting. We must exercise caution. In a similar manner, joy is necessary in our lives, but excess leads also to imbalance. Lake can represent the mouth and tongue. These can be used for pleasure, entertainment and nourishment. They can also be used destructively in speech, impropriety and gluttony. Dui is metal. It is hardness. It is resilient. It is hard and salty just as a dried up lake bed. Dui is waning, breaking apart, decay and autumn. Here ripe

## Qian and Dui

fruits burst open and are collected at harvest. Dui is also reflective, the evening and sunset. It is the west and sincerity. Dui gives back what is mirrored on its calm waters.

Throughout our discussion during the year on each of the trigrams, we have focused in on each of the trigrams. They are formed with three lines which are called yao. The lines themselves are just as important because they reveal smaller but important details on the nature of the Tao. Just as the Tai Chi symbol is made up of Yin and Yang energies as in the diagram below,



The linear representation found in each trigram and consequently in each hexagram reveals more about the workings of the Tao. A trigram is made up of three lines. The top line represents heaven and bottom line represents earth. The coming together of heaven and earth creates human beings. It is this creative dynamic that brings us into being. It is man and woman who produce a child. It is the third dimension. It is the San Tsai or three powers where Yin and Yang do not exist alone but interact and create. It is ultimately the Mandate of Heaven to bring to fruition our destiny. The I Ching both in its Taoist mathematical arrangements and Confucian philosophy can point us into other realms in life. Karl Jung in his 1949 forward to the Wilhelm/Baynes translation of the I Ching points out that “The I Ching insists upon self-knowledge throughout. The method by which this is to be achieved is open to every kind of misuse, and is therefore not for the frivolous-minded and immature; nor is it for intellectualists and rationalists. It is appropriate only for thoughtful and reflective people who like to think about what they do and what happens to them.” (Wilhelm, Baynes, p. xxxiii)

When we reference how the combinations of the trigrams Qian and Dui are used in the I Ching text, we can start to glean important meaning for our lives. Dui doubled produces hexagram number 58, Dui, where the judgment reads:

“The Joyous. Success.  
Perseverance is favorable.”

And the image reads as:

“Lakes resting one on another:  
The image of the Joyous.  
Thus the superior man joins with his friends  
For discussion and practice.” (Wilhelm/Baynes, p. 224)

# Qian and Dui

However, the combination of Dui above and Qian below reveal the situation in number 43, Guai, where caution needs to be exercised.

The judgment reads:

“Break-through. One must resolutely make the matter known  
At the court of the king.  
It must be announced truthfully. Danger.  
It is necessary to notify one’s own city.  
It does not further to resort to arms.  
It furthers one to undertake something.”

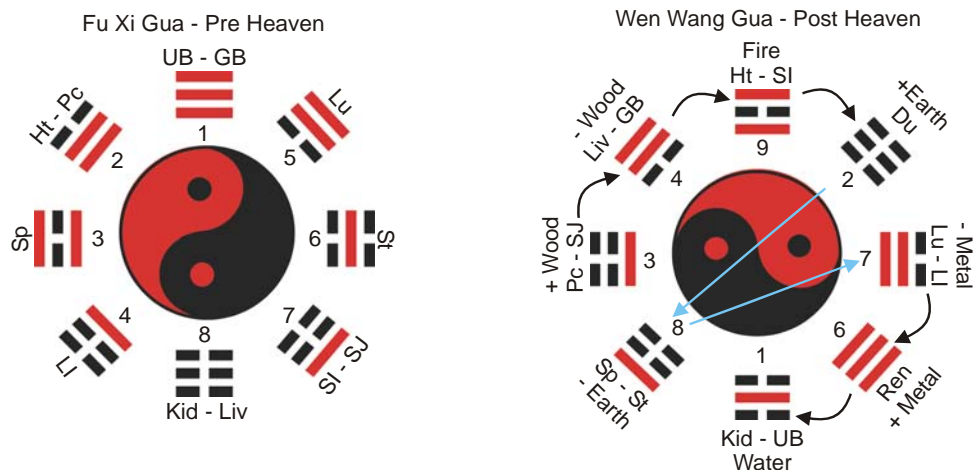
The image reads as:

“The lake has risen up to heaven:  
The image of Break-through.  
Thus the superior man  
Dispenses riches downward  
And refrains from resting on this virtue.” (Wilhelm/Baynes, p. 166, 167)

This is the image of an imbalanced situation where one needs to be cautious. There is the danger of a breakthrough from above where lake as collected.

The I Ching text that we read is a collection of commentaries primarily from King Wen, his son, the Prince of Zhou and Confucius. It reveals the wisdom from these political and cultural leaders in China before our current era. This text is what we are most familiar with today.

The Daoist roots of the I Ching look at the mathematical relationships of the trigrams and how they can be applied to systems through the universe. It is an ongoing source of study for those in information systems as well as to those applying the principles of feng shui and acupuncture. Dr. Alfred Mussat wrote many texts applying these principles to biological systems. He writes that “the I Ching is a work of advanced technology.” (Mussat, p. 124). And as such as we can see how our meridian system can be applied to both the pre- and post-heaven sequences.



# Qian and Dui

In the pre-heaven or Fu Xi sequence, Qian occupies the top first position. It is designated with the most yang meridians in our body, Urinary Bladder and Gall Bladder. They happen to be the longest meridians in the body and start on the head, the most yang area of the body. They are followed by Dui in position number 2 with the Heart and Pericardium meridians. These two organs are located in the upper jiao and ultimately rely on yang for health. It is said that blood is made through the transformatory aspect of Heart-Fire whereas Spleen and Stomach are the main source for Blood as a substance. We can see this yang quality in the positioning of Dui at number 2.

In the post-heaven or Wen Wang sequence, Dui is at number 7, and Qian is at number 6. They are metal. Dui is designated with the Lung and Large Intestine meridians, Qian with the Ren meridian. Here we can see the relationship of the two trigrams in opening the Ren Mai with Lu 7 and Kid 6. Large Intestine and Kidney also lie on the opposite side of the Chinese clock and as such we see their relationship.

These are only examples which show us how we can use the philosophy, imagery and mathematical relationships found in the I Ching to better investigate our medicine. The I Ching is considered one of the classical texts of classical medical study for many in Asia. This article may be the close of this series for the year. Yet, it is only part of the continuing transformatory process that already exists in all of our lives.

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